

Appl. No. 09/677,058
Amdt. dated November 19, 2003
Reply to Office Action of November 18, 2002

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A cover for a safety restraint device for use in a vehicle, the cover comprising:

a face portion capable of being positioned between the safety restraint device and an interior compartment of the vehicle, the face portion comprising an exterior side facing away from the safety restraint device;

a seam formed in the face portion, the seam comprising a nonlinear portion having a first end and a second end, the nonlinear portion comprising a plurality of bends in consecutively alternating directions; and

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an outer layer affixed to the exterior side of the face portion, wherein the outer layer is formed from a material that is sufficiently stiff to resist form-fitting the seam such that a cavity is interposed between the seam and the outer layer, and the outer layer is devoid of visible indicia of the seam.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the bends are adjacent to each other, exclusive of any linear segment therebetween.

4. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the seam further comprises a linear segment

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disposed between and adjacent to two of the bends.

5. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the nonlinear portion further comprises a first linear segment positioned proximate the first end of the nonlinear portion.

6. (Original) The cover of claim 5, wherein the nonlinear portion further comprises a second linear segment positioned proximate the second end of the nonlinear portion.

7. (Original) The cover of claim 6, wherein the nonlinear portion further comprises a nonlinear segment positioned between the first and second linear segments.

8. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the nonlinear portion further comprises a plurality of pairs of bends, each pair comprising two bends oriented in the same direction, the pairs oriented in consecutively alternating directions.

9. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the bends are substantially sharp corners.

10. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the bends are of nonuniform size and shape.

11. (Original) The cover of claim 1, wherein the seam further comprises:

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a first side portion substantially perpendicular to the first end of the nonlinear portion; and
a second side portion substantially perpendicular to the second end of the nonlinear portion.

12. (Original) The cover of claim 11, wherein the first side portion is adjacent to the first end of the nonlinear portion, and the second side portion is adjacent to the second end of the nonlinear portion.

13. (Original) The cover of claim 12, wherein the first and second side portions are substantially linear.

14. (Previously Amended) The cover of claim 1, wherein the face portion is formed by single-shot construction, and wherein the face portion operates exclusive of the outer layer.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Twice Amended) A cover for a safety restraint device for use in a vehicle, the cover comprising:

a face portion positionable between the safety restraint device and an interior compartment of the vehicle, the face portion comprising an exterior side facing away from the

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safety restraint device;

a seam formed in the face portion, the seam comprising a nonlinear portion, the nonlinear portion comprising a plurality of bends in consecutively alternating directions, the bends being adjacent to each other and substantially exclusive of any linear segment therebetween; and

an outer layer affixed to the exterior side of the face portion, wherein the outer layer is formed from a material that is sufficiently stiff to resist form-fitting the seam such that a cavity is interposed between the seam and the outer layer, and the outer layer is devoid of visible indicia of the seam.

17. The cover of claim 16, wherein the seam further comprises:

a first end; and

a second end positioned opposite the first end.

18. The cover of claim 17, wherein the seam further comprises:

a first side portion adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the first end of the nonlinear portion, the first side portion being substantially linear; and

a second side portion adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the second end of the nonlinear portion, the second side portion being substantially linear.

19. (Cancelled)

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20. (Previously Amended) The cover of claim 18, wherein the face portion is formed by single-shot construction, and wherein the face portion operates exclusive of the outer layer.

21. (Twice Amended) A cover for a safety restraint device for use in a vehicle, the cover comprising:

a face portion positionable between the safety restraint device and an interior compartment of the vehicle, the face portion comprising an exterior side facing away from the safety restraint device; and

a seam formed in the face portion, the seam comprising:

a nonlinear portion having a first end and a second end, the nonlinear portion comprising a plurality of bends in consecutively alternating directions, the bends being adjacent to each other and substantially exclusive of any linear segment therebetween;

a first side portion adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the first end of the nonlinear portion, the first side portion being substantially linear; and

a second side portion adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the second end of the nonlinear portion, the second side portion being substantially linear; and

an outer layer affixed to the exterior side of the face portion, wherein the outer layer is

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formed from a material that is sufficiently stiff to resist form-fitting the seam such that a cavity is interposed between the seam and the outer layer, and the outer layer is devoid of visible indicia of the seam.


22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Amended) The cover of claim 21, wherein the face portion is formed by single-shot construction, and wherein the face portion operates exclusive of the outer layer.

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24. (Twice Amended) A method for making a cover for a safety restraint device for use in a vehicle, the method comprising:

providing a face portion adapted to be installed between the safety restraint device and an interior compartment of the vehicle, the face portion comprising an exterior side facing away from the safety restraint device;

forming a seam in the face portion, the seam having a nonlinear portion with a first end and a second end, the nonlinear portion comprising a plurality of bends in consecutively alternating directions; and


affixing an outer layer to the face portion, over the seam, wherein the outer layer is formed from a material that is sufficiently stiff to resist form-fitting the seam such that a cavity is interposed between the seam and the outer layer, and the outer layer is devoid of visible indicia of the seam.

25-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising forming a first side portion adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the first end of the nonlinear portion, the first side portion being substantially linear.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, further comprising forming a second side portion

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adjacent and substantially perpendicular to the second end of the nonlinear portion, the second side portion being substantially linear and parallel to the first side portion.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the seam comprises a recessed portion of the face portion, the recessed portion having a thickness smaller than an average thickness of the face portion.

30. (Amended) A cover for a safety restraint device for use in a vehicle, the cover comprising:

a face portion capable of being positioned between the safety restraint device and an interior compartment of the vehicle, the face portion comprising an exterior side facing away from the safety restraint device; and

a seam formed in the face portion, the seam comprising a nonlinear portion having a first end and a second end, the nonlinear portion comprising at least four bends in consecutively alternating directions; and

an outer layer affixed to the exterior side of the face portion, wherein the outer layer is formed from a material that is sufficiently stiff to resist form-fitting the seam such that a cavity is interposed between the seam and the outer layer, and the outer layer is devoid of visible indicia of the seam.

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31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously Added) The cover of claim 30, wherein the nonlinear portion further comprises at least two pairs of bends, each pair comprising two bends oriented in the same direction, the pairs oriented in consecutively alternating directions.

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33. (Previously Added) The cover of claim 30, wherein the face portion is formed by single-shot construction and wherein the face portion operates exclusive of an outer layer.

34. (Previously Added) The cover of claim 33, wherein the seam is further formed in an interior side of the face portion, the interior side facing toward the safety restraint device, and wherein the exterior side of the face portion comprises a cosmetic surface.